

Executive Registry

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Draft Presidential Statement

John F. Blake
Acting Deputy Director of
Central Intelligence

8 December 1977

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Director of Central
Intelligence
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Stan:

Several of us have concluded in
drafting the attached statement
which is responsive to your request
of me on Wednesday, 7 December

JFB
John F. Blake

Att

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W. H. to J. F. Blake

DRAFT

8 DECEMBER 1977

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

After almost a year in office during which I have had access on a daily basis to the intelligence produced by the CIA, I am glad to be able to state that I have been very pleasantly surprised and impressed by the quality, objectivity, and depth of the CIA's analysis and reporting on events abroad. I have a much surer sense of making right decisions about our own national security because of my growing trust in the capability of the CIA and the other intelligence agencies. In an increasingly complex and dangerous world, we are going to have to rely more heavily in the future on the CIA for prompt and accurate information, insights and analysis on events abroad. I am satisfied that effective oversight of the Agency is being exercised both within the Executive Branch and by the Congress. It is time to lighten the burden on CIA of retrospective criticism and repetitious publicity concerning events that are now well behind us. I can assure the American people that they are being well served by the loyal and competent men and women who work for the CIA. Some reductions in force have had to be made, forcing people with distinguished careers to go. Such readjustments, though difficult and painful, are sometimes necessary to meet the changing requirements of a government agency. But it is crucial that we maintain a strong intelligence capability, and I know that Admiral Turner shares this conviction. I look forward with confidence to working with a CIA under Admiral Turner's direction that is capable of not only continuing but improving on its current excellent performance. He and they have my support and that of the vast majority of the American people.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

After almost a year in office during which I have had access on a daily basis to the intelligence produced by the CIA, I am glad to be able to state that I have been very pleasantly surprised and impressed by the ^{objectivity} quality and depth of the CIA's analysis and reporting on events abroad. In an increasingly complex and dangerous world, we are going to have to rely more heavily in the future on the CIA for prompt and accurate information. I am satisfied that effective oversight of the Agency is being exercised both within the Executive Branch and by the Congress. It is ~~time to give this Agency a chance to make its vital contribution and to~~ lighten the burden on it of retrospective criticism and repetitious publicity concerning events that are now well behind us. I can assure the American people that they are being well served by the loyal and competent men and women who work for the CIA. Some reductions in force ^{FOREIGN} have had to be made, and people with distinguished careers have had to go. But once this difficult readjustment has been accomplished, I look forward with confidence to working with a CIA under Admiral Turner's direction that will be capable of not only continuing but improving on its current excellent performance. ^{He, of} They have my support and that of the vast majority of the American people.

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Notes from the Director

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26 May 1977

TELEVISION FILMING

On May 23rd we began some television filming here in the Headquarters building. The occasion will be a segment of "60 Minutes," for CBS. I realize this is the first time this has happened, and that it will be somewhat disruptive to many of you while the filming is going on. But I want to assure you that the filming is taking place under closely controlled conditions, with due respect for the security problems involved.

I consider this an important precedent. I believe that the American people, with due recognition for the need to keep secrets in the intelligence community, have an interest and a right to know something of intelligence in government—the environment in which we work, the kinds of things we do, and our important contribution to the government and its processes. The "60 Minutes" program has a large viewing audience—some 40 million people. My hope is that this will give us an opportunity to get some of our message across: that intelligence is vital to our country's security, including an appropriate measure of secrecy, and that those of us in the intelligence business are just as dedicated to the principles and ideals of our democracy as any American.

PRESIDENT CARTER ON INTELLIGENCE

Last month at the White House, I briefed the Cabinet and senior staff members of the White House and their spouses on the Central Intelligence Agency and the Intelligence Community. The President took that opportunity to make some extemporaneous comments about intelligence and the Agency which I would like to share with you. Following are excerpts from the remarks by President Carter:

* * * *

"First of all I would like to thank Stan for giving us this good briefing and thank all of you for coming. I, like many of you, before I became

President and became involved in this Administration, had been deeply concerned about the reputation of the CIA and the entire Intelligence Community, and also was concerned about the professionalism of them. But I can tell you without hesitation that since I have been in the White House and been responsible for our nation's security above everyone else, I have been highly impressed by the competence and objectivity and the ability of the Intelligence Community to give me accurate and unbiased analyses that were important to me and to other members of the Cabinet."

"I can also tell you that I have looked at all the analyses made by the Intelligence Oversight Board for the last 12 months after the revelations were made by the Congressional investigations and I think I'm completely accurate in saying there are absolutely no illegalities being perpetrated by the CIA, there are no improprieties being perpetrated by the CIA."

* * * *

"I think if all Americans knew what I know about the present function of the Intelligence Community, there would be an alleviation of concern and it's nothing at all to be ashamed of."

* * * *

"It's absolutely crucial that we maintain a capability for covert action . . . In case we ever should find ourselves in a state of conflict with another nation, we've got to have an instant ability to address that question."

* * * *

"I have a much surer sense of making right decisions about our own national security because of my growing trust in the capability of the CIA and the other intelligence counsels."

* * * *

"I think that all of you can rest assured that except in the rare occasions there won't be any illegalities, and even those will be instantly punished when detected. There's not anything going on that if you knew about it you'd be ashamed of."

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The President also spoke of the importance of biographical data that has been supplied to him by the Agency, the importance of our ability to monitor the implementation of SALT, and our reporting on terrorism.

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY REORGANIZATION

There have been articles in the newspapers recently concerning the intent of the Senate Select Committee on intelligence to propose some important organizational changes in the Intelligence Community. As many of you know,

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Sent to DCI

8 Dec. 77 —

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